

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,

As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly disappointed by the lack of informative television programming.

Local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--constituting less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

I am most concerned with the lack of good information which is not made available to the public about the environment. There is too much evidence that climate change is occurring and that human habits of consumption are affecting this change. Yet unless one turns to science programs or read specific journals, one does not get this information. Occasionally one learns a little about energy efficiency and how more efficient machines would save us more fuel than all the oil we get from the Saudi Arabia. Where does one find such information on television? You need to make sure that the airwaves which the media use are used more responsibly. Why hasn't the media been held accountable? What are the criteria for use of media? How are they evaluated? How is it that the companies who are making so much money are not responsible to the public?

Sincerely,

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